

recordonline.com

TIMES HERALD-RECORD

With passion for people, son takes over Monroe institution

By Chris McKenna, The Times Herald-Record

Posted Jul 8, 2002 at 2:00 AM

Updated Dec 15, 2010 at 6:51 PM

Monroe — The guy who just started running Rosmarins Cottages and Day Camp is a familiar face to the people lounging in front of the tree-shaded bungalows, playing handball and strolling to the pool.

Some even remember Scott Rosmarin when he was a tot, because they've been coming for 40 years or more. Rosmarin is 45 now and married, and his children are running around the same camp with the grandkids of some longtime bungalow dwellers.

This is where Rosmarin grew up, and he's doing now what he intended to do. In November, he quit his commodities-trading job in New York City to take responsibility for running the camp and bungalow colony, a family business since 1941.

His father, Marty, who took over the business from his father in 1954, has relinquished the operational duties to Scott, but still helps with chores. "I took the truck to have it inspected — brainteasers like that," he joked recently.

He was sitting on a bench in front of the house beside School Road where he and his wife, Belle, raised their four children. The business is run from an office inside the house. Camp workers stroll through the office into Marty and Belle's kitchen to warm their lunches and eat — a taste of the strong family atmosphere at Rosmarins.

It's been a good career, with no regrets or second thoughts, Marty Rosmarin said. "It was something I always believed in. I met some very nice people." He added, "Money was OK. It wasn't stupendous."

His blue eyes watered as he talked about his son taking over. "Now I know how my father must have felt when I took over," he said. A long pause as he collected himself. "It's nice to feel he thought enough of this place to want to continue it."

His son said he always wanted to “live a life like my dad did.”

“It’s very rewarding,” he said. “It gives me a good feeling of satisfaction.”

The sense of community was palpable last week as Scott navigated a golf cart past the 98 bungalows, greeting residents. Some have become so close to the Rosmarins that they go to each others’ family weddings and bar mitzvahs.

“It’s the perfect way of life,” Rosalinda Lazarus said, sitting at a patio table with her husband, Ted, and daughter, Kara. Their family has been fleeing Queens for Rosmarins every summer for 20 years. “You only wish it would be warmer for longer.”

Everybody looks after everybody else here. “A child gets hurt, 100 mothers come running,” Lazarus said.

Manny and Lila Molho have been coming since 1959, except for a two-year period when they thought they’d try spending summers at their new home in Westbury, Conn. They soon thought better of it.

“I come back because I know all the people and I still like the facilities,” Manny Molho said. “We’ve had some unbelievable times here.” And at roughly \$400 a week, it’s still an inexpensive place to spend the summer, he added.

There are usually more than 400 campers between ages — and 13, perhaps 50 of them the children of bungalow residents, and the rest from Orange County families. The camp has around 100 staff members, Scott Rosmarin said.

This year, the camp invited local families who lost a parent on Sept. 11 to send their children to the camp for free. Scott looked at newspaper clippings and called the families themselves. Four widows accepted, and eight children altogether are attending the camp, which began July 1.

“It was a wonderful offer,” said Liz Hamilton of Washingtonville, whose firefighter husband Robert, 43, died at the World Trade Center. Their two children, ages 12 and 8, are going to the camp. “They are thoroughly enjoying it,” Hamilton said.

Running the camp and bungalow colony is now Scott Rosmarin’s full-time job, one that goes seven days a week during summer and continues long after the bungalows empty out around Labor Day. He and his wife, Stacey, a Monroe pediatrician, have built a brick house just outside the 110 acres of camp and bungalow property.

Scott said he'll be running the family business for the foreseeable future.

"Hopefully, my son'll run it some day," he said. "That's my fantasy."